Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 ACDA-10 FEA-01 NASA-02 ERDA-07 NRC-07 OES-06 /099 W

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: JA,US,ENRG,PFOR, TECH,MNUC

SUBJECT: JAPANESE PUBLIC REACTION TO PRESIDENT'S NUCLEAR

REF: TOKYO 5112

1. AS REPORTED IN JAPANESE PRESS, GOJ PUBLIC STATEMENTS ON PRESIDENT'S APRIL 8 NUCLEAR POLICY STATEMENT HAVE BEEN MIXED. ACTING CABINET SECRETARY FUJITA INITIALLY DESCRIBED US ATTITUDE AS "STILL SEVERE." FONOFF PRESS BACKGROUNDER, HOWEVER, TOOK MORE POSITIVE LINE, CHARACTERIZING PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT AS "NOT AS SEVERE AS HAD BEEN EXPECTED" AND DEMONSTRATING "GREATER US UNDERSTANDING OF JAPAN'S SITUATION." FONOFF WENT ON TO NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT USG HAS NOT YET MADE DECISION ON FUTURE OF TOKAI-MURA REPROCESSING PLANT AND UNDERSCORED IMPORTANCE GOJ ATTACHES TO CURRENT CONSULTATIONS IN WASHINGTON ON THIS ISSUE.

2. JAPANESE EDITORIAL REACTION WAS SIMILARLY VARIED.
MAINICHI COMMENTARY DETECTED SOME "FLEXIBILITY" IN NEW
US POLICY WHILE MOST OTHER PAPERS - YOMIURI, SANKEI,
TOKYO SHIMBUN - WERE SHARPER IN TONE, CRITICIZING
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EITHER "SUDDEN" OR "SELF-CENTERED" NATURE OF US DECISION. ALL PAPERS, HOWEVER, URGED JAPAN TO MAKE MORE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN CURBING NUCLEAR PROLIFERATION.

3. IN GENERAL VOLUME OF NEWSPAPER COVERAGE OF NUCLEAR ISSUE HAS DIMINISHED AND TONE IS LESS SHRILL. MEDIA

IS APPARENTLY AWAITING RESULTS OF CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS
IN WASHINGTON.
SHOESMITH

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